796 There are few Caribs who have women and children who do not participate in the élétouac feast, for it is one of their most solemn. It sometimes takes four months to prepare for it. The hair of the women and children is shaved close to their temples. At this feast they begin to feed fish to their small children. They do not permit their children to eat fish for a long time, because of the fish bones and also because fish causes colic and stomach cramps. The elders and the married men bring birds of prey. The children bring in little birds, and the married men bring big and full grown birds that they have taken from their nests and reared for this ceremony. The captain is invited to perform. He takes the birds and beats the heads of the birds against the heads of the performers so that they are bloody. He gashes both the children and the older men. He puts the children into their hammocks where they must remain without eating, and they must keep the position which he has given them. If they do not remain in this position it is believed that they will become hunch-backed or deformed according to the new position they might take. The birds of the married men are crushed if they have had children or have killed some Arawaks. With a quantity of black pepper or pimento, they rub their wounds. You can imagine how cold they are! In order to restore them they are given the heart of their bird to eat, but nothing more. Fearing that this may cause some indigestion, the [208] next morning they go to a drinking pot full of a tobacco liquid and drink long drafts of it which makes them vomit everything. [202]

[85] They have a feast in which the smallest children begin to eat [202] fish. The older children have their ears pierced and their hair cut. [385] The ioubénene is the man who incises them at their feasts and [225] is considered as their godfather. [191] There are certain people who are asked to make small wicker tables, baskets carried on the back, and other utensils necessary for the feast called élétouac. [317]

3a) Among all the guests there are six or eight who rub their bodies with elemi gum that is still fresh from the tree. They glue on small feathers and down from the bird called Festu en Queue. They crown their heads with long feathers of the Aras [macaw?] bird. Then they 595 393 dance two by two around the carbet. One extends his right arm on the shoulders of another who in turn passes his left arm around the neck of his companion. The others follow in a like manner. Dancing two by two, they arrive at the place where there are big calabashes full

The register of births includes, from the first of January, 1917, to March, 1920, 70 births, of which only 38 are legitimate, with an equal number of children of each sex. The register of deaths mentions in the same lapse of time 48 deaths, caused by the following illnesses, whose diagnosis is perhaps slightly capricious.

Dysentery	15	Disorders of the heart	1
Fever	13	" of the blood	1
Pleurisy	4	Accidents	3
Sunstroke	2	Stillborn or dead	
Bronchitis	1	shortly after birth	8

These deaths are distributed as follows according to age:

	Masculine	Feminine		Masculine	Feminine
Up to 3	14	11	From 15 to 50	12	3
From 3 to 15	2	3	Over 50	0	3

The three women who died above the age of fifty were respectively 80, 87, and 89 years old, and in examining the last figures in the chart one notes that longevity is greater in the feminine sex than in the masculine.

/142/ Incestuous marriages are still frequent; they were the rule formerly; "fathers," according to Father Duterte, "married their daughters, mothers, their sons, and the same man married two sisters or the mother and the daughter. Women married at the age of seventeen or eighteen, but they are nubile younger and often have children before this age. Formerly polygamy was general and the Caribs had as many as seven wives, not counting those whom they married on each island where they went often. Now that the Caribs profess, at least nominally, the Catholic faith, a man has only one legitimate wife; it is true that he adds as many concubines as his fortune permits him to have. Children are generally numerous; there are 8 or 9 on the average and up to 14; the number of stillbirths and the infant mortality is 11.4 per 100.

Religious ideas, according to all the ancient travellers, were very little developed among the Caribs of the Antilles and consisted simply of a vague belief in a good and an evil principle, which they called manitou, but they had no word to denote God or a superior Spirit.

they liked for a further period of two or three months, and thereafter only continued to abstain from certain activities and meats for some time.

When the child began to be given fish to eat at about the age of two years, its hair was cut for the first time ceremonially, and its mother's temples shaved. The piercing of its ears, etc., apparently also took place at this ceremony (nikulukáyanų, nùbukaétių) which, according to Breton's description, was held concurrently with an elétuak festival.

The latter appears to have been a family rather than a tribal affair, although intended for the carrying out of all the *rites de passage*, such as initiation of infants (into the tribe) and adolescents (into manhood), and for the purification and reintegration of those who had for the first time become parents or had killed an enemy.

> Il y a peu de Sauvages qui ayent femmes et enfans, qui ne fassent ce festin icy, qui est un de leurs plus solemnels: ils sont quelque fois des quatre mois à s'y préparer, on y rase le poil des tempes aux femmes, et à leur petits enfans auxquels on commence d'y faire manger du poisson.

Besides large quantities of wiku to be prepared for the feathered dancers (eletuakátių tíomáliti) and guests, basketry tables (matítu) and other utensils for the rites must be made, and those asked to help by making them (itawénamuku) repaid for their trouble by a special drinking-party (ítehwenə). Moreover, after the elétuak festival all such articles were held to be fair plunder for the guests.

The name, elétuak, appears to connote *a putting out from* or *forth-putting*, (cf. élelenúba *incise! let [blood]!* < éle *power, strength;* and as a stem: *choose, extend, endure:* élele *speech* or *flame;* átu[ra] [*to*]*put forth*); and the essential part of the rites performed on these occasions consisted in blood-letting.[6] Breton goes on to describe them thus:

> . . . les grands, voire les maries apportent quand et eux des oyseaux de rapine, les petits des petits, les mariez des gros et grands qu'ils ont pris dans le nid et nourris pour ce mystère. Le capitaine qui est prié pour cela prend les oyseaux et leur casse la teste sur leurs testes qui en restent ensanglantées. Il incise les petits et les grands, même les petits dans leurs lits qui y doivent demeurer sans manger, et en la posture qu'il leur donne, sans laquelle ils croyent qu'ils demeureroient bossus ou contrefais, suivant celle qu'ils prendroient dans ce lit [i. e. hammock]. On écrase les oyseaux des grands (s'ils ont eu enfans, ou s'ils ont tué quelque Arroüague) avec quantité de gros grains de poivre [*Capsicum*], ou piment: [< Carib, boémwę *Capsicum* <

6 Hunters still make razor cuts in their arms to improve their luck, while incision and cupping are practised to relieve pain.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946

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boémę crown ?], puis on les en frotte partout oú ils sont incisez, pensez s'ils ont froid! Pour les restorer on leur donne à manger le coeur de leur oyseau seullement; et crainte qu'il ne leur cause quelque indigestion, dès le grand matin, ils vont à un canari plein d'infusion de tabac, qu'ils boivent à longs traits, et qui leur fait rendre tripes et boudins.

Entre tous les conviés il y en a 6 ou 8 qui se frottent tout le corps de gomme d'Elemie [*Dacryodes excelsa* Vahl] encore liquide et degouttante de l'arbre, à laquelle on attache du duvet, ou petites plumes du festu-en-queue [*Phaeton aethereus*], et on couronne leurs testes de grandes plumes d'Arras, puis on les fait danser, deux à deux, autour du Carbet, l'un estendant son bras droit sur les epaulles de l'autre, et l'autre sa gauche autour du col de son compagnon. Les autres suivent en la meme posture, et en dansant deux à deux jusque a ce qu'ils soient arrivez au lieu où ils trouvent des grandes callebasses pleines d'oüicou, qu'il faut avaller jusqu' à la derniere goutte, encore qu'ils en deussent crever.

Other authors tell us that the "gligli" and "malfini" hawks were the birds usually employed in these rites; that the heart was dried over the fire before it was eaten, and the feet often set aside to be worn in an amulet; that the initiate's head and neck were anointed with oil; and that water, and tobacco and roku *(Bixa orellana)* leaves, as well as *Capsicum*, were crushed up with the bird's body to be rubbed on the men's backs.

No official form of divorce is recorded, but there is plenty of evidence to show that separation and remarriage of wives took place, consequent upon incompetence, neglect, or desertion on the part of the husband. Children always remained, in such cases, with the mother. Widows and widowers were free to remarry when and whom they pleased.

As soon as they are dead [says Breton] they paint them red [with roku], comb them, and, if they are of consequence, wrap them in a fine cotton bed, and in the middle of the hut dig a round hole of a depth proportionate to the posture they give them (which is that which they had in their mother's womb) [Labat says: "seated on a little stool, elbows on knees and chin in cupped hands"] into which they are lowered onto a piece of board placed there, then covered with another such onto which earth is thrown and tears shed, the while they sing their sorrow and lament in a lugubrious tone. This they continue last thing in the evening and at daybreak in the morning for some time. They do not forget their custom of putting bread and wine [cassava-cakes and wiku] on the grave, nor to light a fire all around it for quite a time. After a year they return to weep, remove the boards, throw and trample down earth upon the decayed body, drink the rest of the day and night, and sometimes quit the house and habitation, as I saw them do after the death of their captain, Henri Comte.

Personal belongings, other than those buried with the deceased, usually were burnt.